



7 Day Scotland's Year of Stories



Awash with stunning scenery, fascinating history and world famous culinary delights, Scotland also boasts a rich literary landscape, and many stories have been inspired, created, written or filmed here!

From poets, authors, myths & legends to books, libraries and famous film locations, our team are on hand to provide inspiration to help capture your imagination. Join us as we celebrate #Visitscotlands "Year of Stories" throughout 2022.

Itinerary

Day 1	Arrive in Edinburgh
Day 2	Explore Edinburgh's Literary Highlights
Day 3	Rosslyn Chapel - Dumfries
Day 4	Wigtown - Ayrshire
Day 5	Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park
Day 6	Stirling - Doune Castle
Day 7	Depart from Edinburgh

Highlights

- Elephant House Cafe
- Greyfriars Kirkyard
- Writers' Museum and Makars' Court
- National Library of Scotland
- Mercat Tour
- Edinburgh's famous bookstores
- Rosslyn Chapel
- House & farm of Robert Burns
- Moat Brae
- Scotland's National Book Town, Wigtown
- Burns National Heritage Park and Trail
- Cruise on the Sir Walter Scott Steamship on Loch Katrine
- Doune Castle
- St Giles Cathedral

Full Itinerary



Day 1 : Arrive in Edinburgh

Our Story begins in Edinburgh, the worlds first UNESCO city of literature and home to the International Book Festival every August, the largest public celebration of the written word in the world. Based on the Royal Mile, the Scottish Storytelling Centre is an ideal first stop on your walking tour of Edinburgh, where you can experience Scotland's rich cultural heritage.



With an interactive storywall for children and live story telling, workshops and exhibitions dedicated to traditional Scottish tales, there is something for all the family. Located a short walk away, you will find the Elephant House Café. Not only has it established itself as one of the best tea & coffee houses in the Capital, it has also become world famous by J.K Rowling who penned many of her early novels here overlooking Edinburgh Castle.



It is also frequented by other famous Scottish authors such as Ian Rankin & Alexander McCall. Tucked just behind the café lies the historic Greyfriars Kirkyard and here lies many graves said to have inspired JK Rowlings to create many of the Harry Potter Characters, including Lord Voldemort - aka Tom Riddle. It is also famous for the bronze statue of the famous Greyfriars Bobby which sits just outside the Kirkyard, a famous Scottish story which was also retold in the 1961 Disney adaptation.



Also located within Edinburgh's Oldtown, is the Writers Museum & Makars Court. There you will find a museum dedicated to some of Scotland's most famous literary greats, Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott and Robert Louis Stevenson. Filled with personal possessions of these writers, some dating back to their childhood and a recreation of Sir Walter Scotts dining room - you will feel like you have stepped back in time. The museum also has a gift shop where you can buy copies of the writers greatest works.



Heading towards Edinburgh's New Town, you will pass the National Library of Scotland where you can explore many exhibitions including the Sir Walter Scott and the Historical Novel until 14th May 2022. You will also find a 61m high monument with a marble statue honouring Sir Walter Scott on Princes Street. The monument has several view points, which can be accessed by narrow winding stairways. If you manage to climb the 287 stairs to the top, you are rewarded with a certificate to prove you made it to the top.



End your day with an award winning Mercat Tour, whose Storytellers will regale historic tales and tell you of Edinburgh's haunted past, taking you to Blair Street Underground Vaults - Edinburgh's most famous haunted site.



Day 2: Explore Edinburgh's Literary Highlights

With so many iconic writers, Edinburgh boasts many a number of captivating bookshops and we would encourage you to spend today exploring some of them. Scotland's oldest second-hand and antiquarian bookshop, McNaughtan is still based in the same basement shop where it began in Leith in 1957. They are the only open shop in Edinburgh to be a member of the antiquarian booksellers association, the oldest trade body in the antiquarian book world.



Located just across the road is Topping & Company Booksellers who have a wide variety of books including many new titles and host an all year round literary festival with a range of events taking place. Enjoy a cup of tea or coffee whilst you lose yourself in a new novel. Armchair Books is based in the Grassmarket area and is known to be a labyrinth of tall bookcases that reach up to the ceiling. With thousands of second hand books, you can spend hours perusing all the different titles on offer.

Full Itinerary



Another of Edinburgh's top rated stores is Elvis Shakespeare who are specialist dealers in rare vinyl and quality literature. This evening pay a visit to the Conan Doyle Bar to taste some local food and drinks. The bar name pays homage to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who was born in Picardy Place across the street and studied at Edinburgh University. It is said that one of his professors inspired Conan Doyle's most famous character Sherlock Holmes. Today you will find a commemorative bronze statue of Holmes on Picardy Place.



Day 3: Rosslyn Chapel - Dumfries

Today you will depart Edinburgh and search for the Holy Grail with a visit to Rosslyn Chapel which featured in Dan Brown's book and the Hollywood blockbuster, the Da Vinci Code. You will continue driving south to Dumfries where you will spend the day exploring the history of Robert Burns. With a museum, statue, his town house and Ellisland Farm (built by Robert Burns in 1788), there is plenty to see and learn about one of Scotland's most famous poets.



Dumfries was also famously the town where the author JM Barrie spent his childhood. During his time in Dumfries he often visited Moat Brae and went on to say that the gardens were 'enchanted lands' to him and inspired the world of Peter Pan. Moat Brae is now the headquarters of the National Centre for Children's Literature and offers guided tours around the house and the "enchanted" gardens.



Day 4: Wigtown - Ayrshire

Today head west and visit Wigtown, known as Scotland's National Book Town. If you are looking for a unique experience, Wigtown offers a holiday experience called the "The Open Book" which offers residents the opportunity to run a bookshop for a short period of time whilst staying in the one bedroom flat above.



With exhibitions throughout the year, a book festival in September/October and plenty of bookshops & cafés, it is easy to spend hours in this local town. Continue onwards to Ayrshire where you will find Burns Birthplace museum along with the Burns National Heritage Park and Trail with modern art depicting some of his famous works. There is also the opportunity to celebrate the legacy of Burns with a tasting of the traditional Scottish dish, haggis, neeps and tatties in the museum café.



Day 5: Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

Today you will drive north through the scenic Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. Take a cruise on the Sir Walter Scott Steamship on Loch Katrine, where he wrote the poem "The Lady of the Lake".



Day 6: Stirling - Doune Castle

Today we head just north of Stirling to explore Doune Castle also known as "Castle Leoch" from Outlander, The Castle of Guy De Lombard in Monty Python and the Holy Grail and "Winterfell" in Game of Thrones.



Day 7: Depart from Edinburgh

Time permitting, take a final stroll along the Royal Mile where you will find St Giles Cathedral which was recently the setting for the epic fight scene in Avengers: Infinity War. The Cathedral is open to the public and you can take a roof top tour where you can take in Edinburgh's impressive skyline before heading back to the airport to head home.